

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 03342 030809Z

17

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 IO-14 OMB-01

DRC-01 /123 W

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R 030730Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3303

INFO AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 3342

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, AS

SUBJECT: DR. J.F. CAIRNS ANNOUNCES HE IS CANDIDATE  
FOR POSITION OF DEPUTY LEADER OF ALP

1. IN STATEMENT TO PRESS JUNE 3 DR. J.F. CAIRNS, PROMINENT AUSTRALIAN LEFTIST AND MINISTER FOR OVERSEAS TRADE IN OUTGOING CABINET, STATED HE WOULD BE CANDIDATE FOR POSITION OF DEPUTY LEADER OF AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY. IN TV INTERVIEW JUNE 2 PRESENT DEPUTY LEADER (AND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER), LANCE DARNARD, SAID HE HAD BEEN ENCOURAGED BY PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM TO BE CANDIDATE TO SUCCEED HIMSELF AND GAVE EVERY INDICATION HE WOULD BE IN THE RUNNING. PARLIAMENTARY LABOR CAUCUS (LABOR MEMBERS OF SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES) WILL ELECT LEADER (I.E. PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM) AND DEPTY LEADER. NO DATE FOR CACUS MEETING SET YET, AS COMPOSITION OF SENATE IS NOT YET COMPLETELY CLEAR.

2. CAIRNS HAS BEEN WIDELY REPORTED IN MEDIA FOR PAST TWO WEEKS TO BE CONSIDERING RUNNING FOR POST OF DEPUTY LEADER. HE  
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PAGE 02 CANBER 03342 030809Z

AVOIDED STATEMENT ON SUBJECT UNTIL NOW. IN CONVERSATION WITH

EMBOFF MAY 31 DAVID COMBE, FEDERAL SECRETARY OF LABOR PARTY, SAID THAT CAIRNS HAS ENOUGH SUPPORT TO BE ELECTED DEPUTY LEADER IF HE DECIDES TO BE CANDIDATE. VETERAN POLITICAL COMMENTATOR, ALAN REID, MADE SAME COMMENT PUBLICLY IN TV PROGRAM JUNE 2.

3. CAIRNS HAS LONG BEEN POPULAR FIGURE IN LABOR PARLIAMEN- TARY CAUCS. HE CAME WITHIN SIX VOTES OF REPLACING WHITLAM AS PARLIAMMENTARY LEADER IN 1968, AND HE WAS FIRST MEMBER OF LABOR MINISTRY TO BE ELECTED BY ALP CAUCUS FOLLOWING ELECTIONS OF DEC 1972. HE HAS PRIVATELY MADE CLEAR THAT HE SEES A GREATER ROLE FOR ALP PARLIAMMENTARY CAUCUS, THUS RESPONDING TO WIDESPREAD FEELING IN CACUS THAT WHITLAM HAS NOT PAID ENOUGH ATTENTION TO VIEWS OF CAUCUS MEMBERSHIP IN PAST 17 MONTHS.

4. UNKNOWN QUANTITY AT THIS POINT IS VIEW WHITLAM WILL TAKE. BARNARD HAS BEEN HIS LOYAL FRIEND AND SUPPORTER FOR PAST 20 YEARS, HAS NO AMBITIONS TO UNSEAT WHITLAM, AND HAS GIVEN PRIME MINISTER UNSTINGIN BACKING. CAIRNS HAS BEEN A RIVAL OF WHITLAM'S AND, AT AGE 59 (HE WILL BE 60 IN OCT, 1974), CANNOT AFFORD TO WAIT MUCH LONGER.

5. IF WHITLAM DECIDES TO GIVE BARNARD HIS UNEQUIVOCALSUPPORT, AND PLACES HIS OWN LEADERSHIP OF THE PARTY IN THE BALANCE, WE BELIEVE CAUCUS WILL SUPPORT BARNARD, AND CAIRNS WILL BE DEFEATED. WHITLAM HAS SO FAR AVOIDED COMMENT. CAIRNS STATEMENT WAS HEADLINE NEWS AFTERNOON OF JUNE 3, AND THIS IS MAJOR MOVE WHICH WILL DOMINATE POLITICAL AREANA UNTIL LABOR CAUCUS MEETS. GREEN

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